

Alaska Water Quality Standard Projects
Quarterly Status Report
April 2016

1. Adoption of Antidegradation Implementation Methods (Division and CO priority)

Lead: Michelle

Staff: Earl/Nancy

Activity:

- Tier 3: DEC working with Gov. Office to determine next steps

Challenges:

- Determining best means to address Tier 3 process and protocols

Next Steps/Schedule:

Continued outreach to stakeholders

Decision required:

- Not at this time
-

2. Evaluate options for revisions to Human Health Criteria (HHC): (Division and CO priority)

Lead: Michelle

Staff: Nancy/Brock

Activity:

- Technical Workgroup
 - Mtg #7 will take place on May 11th.
- Working with EPA on bioaccumulation and trophic level issues

Challenges:

- Ensuring CO concerns are adequately addressed at each stage of the process
- Ensuring transparency in the process

Next Steps/Schedule

- Continue to work through information gathering process
- Continue to monitor other state efforts

Decision Needed:

- Not at this time
-

3. Chuit River Basin Site Specific Criteria

Lead: Nancy/Wade

Staff: Brock/Allen (APDES)

Activity

- DEC/PacRim awaiting specific feedback from EPA-HQ
- Discussed critical conditions ‘trigger’ with EPA
 - EPA requested inclusion of pH and hardness with DOC limits in SSC
 - EPA HQ is discussing the implications of including conditions in SSC rulemaking

Challenges:

- Coordinating numerous internal and external participants in process:

Next Steps/Schedule:

- Await EPA-HQ comments
-

4. Jumbo Dome/Marguerite Creek Site Specific Criteria

Lead: Nancy/Allan

Staff: Brock/Tim Pilon (APDES)

Activity:

- DEC/DOL have legal representation assigned to address EPA questions regarding AG certification- Need contact information for EPA representation

Challenges: Addressing legal concerns

Next Steps:

- DEC/EPA meet to discuss legal concerns
- Submit draft APDES and SSC documentation to EPA for consideration
- Await EPA response

Schedule: TBD

Decision Required? Not at this time

5. Girdwood/Glacier Creek Site Specific Criteria

Lead: Nancy/Brock/Wade

Staff: Denise Elston/Mike Martz

Activity:

- Met with AWWU about project and need to use BLM to make progress in near future
- Denise sent several supporting documents from EPA and other states that have used process for deriving SSC for WW treatment facilities

Challenges:

- Characterizing Glacier Creek

Next Steps:

- Work with AWWU regarding issues with area of concern, Glacier Creek hydrochemistry, and downstream protection (all flow conditions)

Schedule:

- TBD

Decision required?

None

6. Soldotna Site-specific criteria for Copper

Management: Nancy

Staff: Denise

Activity:

- Soldotna working on development of SSC proposal using BLM

Challenges:

- Ensuring early engagement between the applicant, DEC, and EPA regarding appropriate use of the model, assumptions, and potential timeline

Next Steps/Schedule:

- DEC to receive and review SSC proposal

Decision Required

- None at this time
-

7. 2012 Recreation Water Quality Criteria (RWQC)

Lead: Nancy/Brock

Staff: Denise

Activity

- DEC working on draft regulations package
 - DEC conferred with EPA regarding consistency with national guidance- no issues noted

Challenges: None noted

Next Steps: Prepare rulemaking documents (HB 140, Fact Sheet, CO briefing, Public Notice)

Schedule: TBD

Decision Required? Not at this time

8. Re-adoption of 18 AAC 70.005 Nonapplicability of groundwater provision

Lead: Nancy/Brock

Staff: Denise

Activity

- DEC Water/Contaminated Sites Program Staff proposing new regulatory language as part of an intra-agency effort with Water to clarify where 18 AAC 70.005 is made applicable when groundwater is governed under other regulatory frameworks.
- This is not rule making that EPA WQS Unit will need to take action on as groundwater is not regulated under the CWA
 - EPA did provide comments that C-Sites/Water have addressed

Challenges: None noted

Next Steps: Prepare Rulemaking Package (HB 140, Fact Sheet, CO briefing, Public Notice)

Schedule: TBD

Decision Required? Not at this time

9. WQS Variances

Management: Nancy

Staff: Brock

Activity:

- Staff developed draft rulemaking documents pertaining to variances based on revised federal water quality standards language

Challenges:

- None noted

Next Steps/Schedule:

- DEC-internal

Decision Required

- None at this time
-

10. Resolve Issues Delaying EPA Approval of Mixing Zone Guidance by EPA (Division and CO priority):

Management Lead: Sharon

Staff Lead: Nancy/Brock

Activity:

- EPA was working on ESA consultation

ESA Consultation

- Bill Beckwith (EPA) told staff on 3/18 he is currently engaging the services on the ESA component
 - Per KC: “There is only one aspect of consultation remaining and that is an analysis for the Beluga whale; a request letter does not need to be sent; EPA needs to update the BE and send it to the Services...”
 - EPA said that staff turnover at the Services complicates discussions. EPA is working to resolve the issue.

Challenges: Finding time to work on project

Next Steps/Schedule:

- Re-engage EPA

Decision required?

- Not at this time
-

11. Monitor and Assist EPA Review of Residues Criteria (Division and CO priority)

Lead: Sharon

Staff: Denise

Activity:

- None since December 2013.

Challenges:

- Staffing

Next Steps/Schedule:

- Wait for EPA will assign staff to this review

Decision required? None at this time

12. Issues for Monitoring

Nutrients - Denise

- Continue to monitor efforts in the Northwest – EPA R10 held a meeting on Harmful Algal Bloom (HAB).

Adoption of 2013 EPA recommended Ammonia criteria for aquatic life (freshwater)- Denise

- Other states (KS, MO) are addressing implementation challenges via multi-discharger variances
 - DEC is requesting copies for future consideration
 - Start engaging with ADF&G, USGS, USFWS to see if there is new population information on unionid mussels in AK
 - APDES program is reviewing POTWs to determine who and how they may be affected-response pending
-